

Letter To The Editor

Dear Sir:

On Wednesday, January 5, 1977 The Council of Neighborhood Presidents met with Aldermen Palmer and Hall to discuss finding for Citizen Participation. An informed citizenry is obviously not important to Alderman Palmer. He and Jack Donnelly, Director of Planning were constantly trying to confuse the issue of citizen education by having citizens think that they are sacrificing the chance to rehabilitate a house if they attend regional and national C.P. meetings, which will inform them about programs and give information on issues relevant to Citizen Participation. The issue of what takes priority as far as funding goes is not in question. What is in question is simply that we wish to be informed from a citizen prospective, not a staff one, even though they may not be in conflict with each other.

In a city letter dated November, 1976, "Questions and Answers on Citizen Participation in Community Development" a document intended for inclusion in the performance report to HUD. The city indicated that they have a citizen participation structure consisting of a Council of Presidents and Ward Level Neighborhood Councils which will act as a citizen advisory to the Board of Aldermen.

However, Citizen Participation in reality is an incomplete process, taking place when it is convenient for the needs of the city and

staff. Being evident during the application stage for grants, then falling by the wayside during the projects implementation, monitoring and evaluation. There is additionally a scarcity of organized efforts and information about on-going projects with decision making meetings being scheduled in the afternoon when most citizens are working. There is a pretense of holding preliminary meetings to provide information on the CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) Program to solicit citizens comments on the proposed application. However, because of a lack of education on the provisions of the Act, citizens are not knowledgeable enough to make meaningful comments.

Citizen Participation should be the leading mechanism for assuring that staff and elected officials heed the aspirations of their citizens, rather than the citizen being "left to the mercy of city fathers and mothers." The need that we perceive for funding is to make Citizen Participation an effective force. "Politics is the art of preventing people from taking part in affairs which properly concern them."

Sincerely,
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Blacks Fear Large Conspiracy

by Rudy Anderson
Staff Reporter

In light of recent disclosures about black notables, many blacks have become extremely cautious about their shopping habits and exposure in the press.

As one administrator put it, "Some of our leaders are literally walking in and out of these stores with their hands in the air." He like many other blacks interviewed Monday, felt there could be no doubt in anyone's mind that conspiracies have been underway here for quite some time to discredit blacks seeking powerful positions or those in powerful enough positions to be feared.

An elderly woman used the Andrews shoplifting case as an example of a man being needlessly dragged through the mud. Her anger was inflamed when word came that charges against him had just been dropped.

"You hear that," she said, "it is a dog gone shame. If they really had something on him they would have nailed him to the wall." She turned and walked away muttering, "charges dismissed!"
Forsyth District Court

Judge William Freeman ruled that Andrews had already been tried once on the charge and could not be tried again. He said District Attorney Donald K. Tisdale's action in voluntarily dismissing the case initially constituted a final disposition.

The court ruled that filing a second charge was double jeopardy (trying a person for the same crime twice) and that violated the U.S. Constitution.

A student at Wake Forest, who had never been here before except to go to college, said he had no intention of "hanging around here after graduation." "Anything can happen to a black person here, especially if you show you have drive and ambition," he said.

He said the latest public disclosures about blacks he considered to be leaders in the community, and the minimal efforts of blacks generally to do something about it, convinced him to leave.

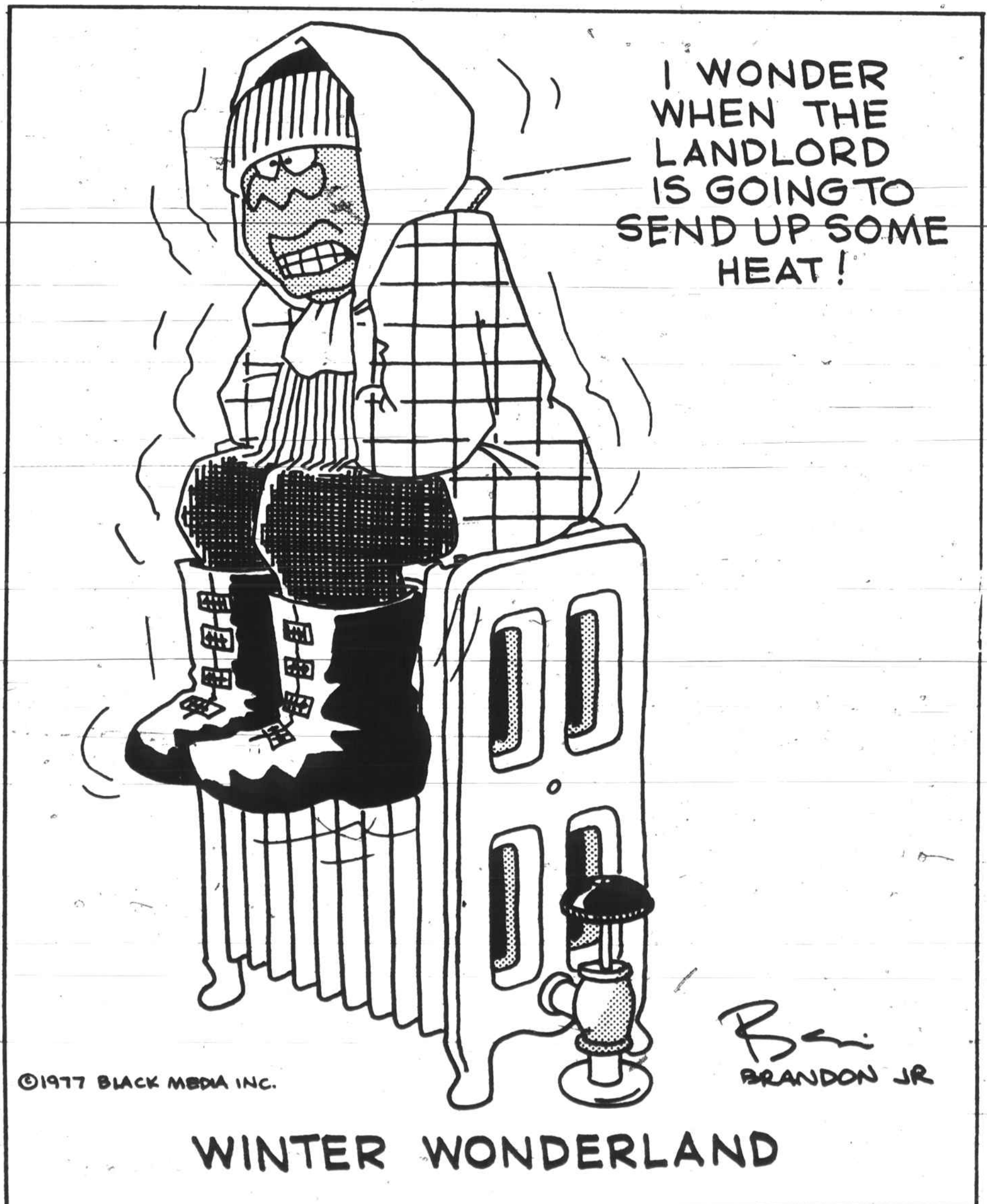
Some blacks have privately expressed a concern that blacks who are receiving media attention are being singled out by those who feel

that nullifying black leaders will stop whatever power surge blacks in the city try to mount.

Whether their suspicions are well-founded or not, the idea that blacks here are under surveillance has left an extremely bad taste in the mouths of many.

"It will be quite some time before any black person here will feel at ease talking to anyone from the press," said one politically active young lady. "Once they get their hooks in you, they never let go," she said. She said she was referred to the white power structure.

Using the Sumler case and the Andrews case, she said, "They convicted Rodney, made him pay a fine, gave him a suspended sentence. Really, what they did was put a stamp on his back that will follow him forever." She added, "They dismissed the case against Andrews, but the D.A.'s office will appeal the judge's decision. They want Andrews."



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WINTER WONDERLAND

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Peggy Aldridge

I read the
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